

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 260450Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9342

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 20007

FOL TEL FROM CHIANG MAI DATED 23 DEC SENT ACTION BANGKOK
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QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CHIANG MAI 412

BANGKOK PASS AMCONSUL SONGKHLA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJECT: CAMPAIGN '75 -- III

1. SUMMARY: CAMPAIGN IN NORTH IS FOR MOST PART DULL AND
VOTERS APATHETIC. SOME CANDIDATES COMPLAIN ABOUT PROLIFERA-
TION OF CANDIDATES WHO ARE NOT SERIOUS CONTENDERS, AND IN A
FEW INSTANCES, EX-UTTP MPS ARE BEING ATTACKED FOR PAST
ASSOCIATIONS. MEANWHILE, MYSTERY CANDIDATE HAS RECENTLY
APPEARED. END SUMMARY

2. CAMPAIGN TACTICS REMAIN LOW-KEY IN NORTH WITH CANDIDATES
CONCENTRATING ON VISITS TO VILLAGES, VANS WITH BANNERS AND
LOUDSPEAKERS, AND POSTERS. MOVIES ARE POPULAR WAY TO PRO-
DUCE AN AUDIENCE AT WHICH CANDIDATES ADMIT CAMPAIGN SPEECHES
ARE USUALLY TOLERATED FOR ONLY A FEW MINUTES MID-WAY THROUGH
THE SCREENING.

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3. DESPITE GOVT. ATTEMPTS TO INTEREST POPULACE, THOSE WHO BOTHER TO CHECK REGISTRATION ARE FEW. DISTRICT OFFICER IN FAK THA, UTTARADIT SAID HE HAS STAFF ASK EVERYONE WHO VISITS DISTRICT OFFICE, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR PURPOSE, TO CHECK REGISTRATION BEFORE LEAVING. MOST PEOPLE APPEAR TO ASSUME, HOWEVER, THEY WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE VOTING WHEN TIME COMES.

4. CANDIDATES IN SEVERAL PROVINCES HAVE EXPRESSED RESENTMENT OVER PROLIFERATION OF CANDIDATES, SOME OF WHOM, THEY CLAIM, ARE NOT REALLY INTERESTED IN WINNING BUT HAVE BEEN FIELDDED TO DRAW SUPPORT AWAY FROM MORE SERIOUS CON-TENDERS. EX-UTPP MPS ARE IN SOME PROVINCES BEING OBLIGED TO DEFEND THEMSELVES FOR CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THANOM-PRAPAT REGIME. IT REMAINS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT WHAT, IF ANY, EFFECT THIS TACK WILL HAVE ON OUTCOME.

5. TIDBITS FROM VARIOUS PROVINCES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. CHIANG RAI - RIVAL CANDIDATES ARE BEGINNING TO TEAR DOWN EACH OTHER' POSTERS. SOCIALIST PARTY CANDIDATES ARE NOT WELL KNOWN IN CHIANG RAI AND NOT EXPECTED TO DO WELL. DEMOCRATS ARE ADVERTISING THAT M.R. SENI PRAMOT WILL VISIT CHIANG RAI "SOON."

B. NAN - "FRONT-RUNNERS" FOR NAN'S THREE SEATS ARE SOMCHAI LOHACHOTE (SOC AGRARIAN), PRASERT THUNGSI (DEMOCRAT), AND SOMBOON BUNDIT (SOC JUSTICE). CAMPAIGN TACTICS FOLLOW GENERAL PATTERN ALTHOUGH SENSITIVE AREAS OF PROVINCE ARE BEING AVOIDED.

C. UTTARADIT - RESULTS OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE BEING CONTESTED IN SRI PANNOMAS; COURT IS INVESTIGATING ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES AND WILL DECIDE WHETHER TO HAVE RE-COUNT OR HOLD NEW ELECTION. FRONT-RUNNERS FOR THREE SEATS ARE SERM LOKLUENG (THAI NATION), BOONYONG WATANAPONG (SOC JUSTICE), SONG SALAYAPONG (SOC NATIONALIST), PEUNG SRICHAND (SOC JUSTICE) AND PLOI KAMCHU (DEMOCRAT).

D. PHRAE - FRONT-RUNNERS FOR PHRAE'S THREE SEATS ARE
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NAKHON TANCHANPONG (SOC JUSTICE), TONG KANTATHAM (SOC JUSTICE), SUTHAM SAISOM (SOC NATIONALIST), CHUWIT CITSAXHUN (NEW FORCE) AND THE ONLY WOMAN CANDIDATE IN PHRAE, KHUNYING BUAKIAO RANGKASIRI (SOC NATIONALIST). PROVINCE OFFICIALS EXPECT GOOD VOTER TURN-OUT AND SAY ALL CANDIDATES ARE WORKING HARD AT CAMPAIGNING.

E. LAMPANG - LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ARE INTO EDITORIALIZING

ON ELECTION AND SUPPORTING VARIOUS CONTENDERS. SOC ACTION CANDIDATES SEEM TO BE LEADING PACK ALTHOUGH WORKERS' PARTY IS ALSO WELL SUPPORTED. SOCIALISTS ARE REPORTEDLY SLIPPING. M.R. KHUKHRIT PRAMOT IS EXPECTED IN LAMPANG DEC. 26 (NOTE: LAMPANG WILL BE SUBJECT OF "PROVINCE CLOSE-UP" REPORT DUE NEXT WEEK.)

F. PHITSANULOK - EFFORTS TO COME UP WITH HARD CAMPAIGN ISSUES ARE NOT MEETING WITH MUCH SUCCESS, AND VOTER APATHY IS MOST OBVIOUS LOCAL TREND. LOCAL PUNDITS EXPECT FORMER UTPP MP SUCHON CHARMPUNOOT TO BE TOP VOTE GETTER. SUCHON HIMSELF FEELS HIS MOST FORMIDABLE OPPONENT IS ANAN PHAKPRAPHAI (THAI PARTY), ONE OF THREE FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS JAILED BY THANOM GOVT FOR ACCUSING "TYRANTS" OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES. SEVERAL COLLEGE EDUCATED BUSINESSMEN TOLD CONOFF THAT MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN PHITSANULOK FELT GOVT BEING ELECTED IN JANUARY WOULD NEVER LAST; AN ARMY TAKE-OVER WAS INEVITABLE AND MOST PEOPLE WOULD BE GLAD WHEN IT HAPPENED BECAUSE "WE THAI RESPECT SOLDIERS MORE THAN POLITICIANS." SOME STUDENTS, HOWEVER, HAVE SHOWN ACTIVE INTEREST IN ASSISTING GOVT OFFICIALS PREPARE FOR ELECTION, AND ONE CANDIDATE HAS HIRED ABOUT 200 YOUNG PEOPLE, GIVEN THEM UNIFORMS AND PUT THEM TO WORK DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS.

G. PHICHIT - DEPUTY GOVERNOR HAS SET UP ELABORATE ELECTION SITUATION ROOM OVER WHICH HE WILL TAKE CHARGE ON ELECTION EVE. "WAR ROOM" IS, HOWEVER, PRESENTLY MANNED BY FOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME IN AFTERNOON. EX-UTPP MP PAYAB PAOBLEK IS EXPECTED TO FINISH FIRST.

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9343

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 20007

C O N F I D E N T I A L CHIANG MAI 412

BANGKOK PASS AMCONSUL SONGKHLA

H. KAMPHAENG PHET - CANDIDATE PRASIT CHUPINIT (THAI NATION) HAS, AS A FORMER UTPP MEMBER, BEEN ATTACKED FOR HIS ALLEGED SUPPORT OF FORMER GOVT. HE WAS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT LARGE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES, MANY OF WHOM WEREN'T SERIOUS, RUNNING AGAINST HIM THAN FORMER ASSOCIATION. OTHER THAN HIS OWN PARTY SLATE, PRASIT SAID KASEM CHONGSAWASDI (SOCIAL NATIONALIST) WAS CURRENT FAVORITE.

I. SUKHOTHAI - THAI NATION CANDIDATES BOONTHAM CHOMDUANG AND SAMRUAY THAMMASUNTARA ARE EXPECTED TO DO WELL IN SUKHOTHAI. PENG LIMPAPHAN, AN EX-MP AND INVLUENTIAL MEMBER OF COMMUNITY THERE, TOLD CONOFF HE ADVISED MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY NOT TO RUN BECAUSE HE FEARS PARLIAMENT WILL BE DISSOLVED BY THE MILITARY. PENG HIMSELF SAID HE TOO OLD TO RUN.

J. LAMPHUN - LAMPHUN'S FRONT RUNNER AND EX-MP SANT THEPMANI (SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY) INFORMED CONSUL DEC. 23 THAT HE HAS RECEIVED LETTER THREATENING HIS LIFE AND HAS THEREFORE DECIDED TO LEAVE ON A WORLD TOUR ONE WEEK PRIOR TO ELECTION. HE EXPECTS RUNNING MATE AND FORMER DEMOCRAT MP BOOMMEE TUNGANAKON TO WIN LAMPHUN'S OTHER SEAT,
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BUT OTHER SOURCES STATE YOUTHFUL SEMOCRAT PARTY CANDIDATE SUVIT SAENCHAI (39) HAS OUTSIDE CHANCE, ON BASIS BOONMEE'S AGE (72) AND PARTY-SWITCHING.

6. A MYSTERY CANDIDATE HAS APPEARED IN NORTH DURING PAST WEEK AND IS MAKING STRONG PITCH FOR YOUTH VOTE. HE HAS ALREADY PROMISED CONSIDERABLY MORE GOODIES TO YOUNG PEOPLE THAN OTHER CANDIDATES COMBINED BUT AT SAME TIME IS ATTEMPTING TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRADITIONAL ASIAN RESPECT FOR AGE BY AFFECTING LONG WHITE BEARD. ANOTHER FEATURE OF HIS CAMPAIGN IS USE OF SLEIGH-LIKE VEHICLE PULLED BY BARKING DEER, EVIDENTLY A BID FOR ECOLOGY VOTE. DR. SUTHEP, WHO HOLDS NORTHERN FRANCHISE FOR T-ETERNAL FUEL, IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE COME UP WITH SOME FANTASTIC NEW DEAR (SIC) FEED WHICH WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR MYSTERY CANDIDATE TO COMPLETE HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CANVASS OF ENTIRE NORTH IN ONE EVENING, DECEMBER 24. FOREIGN POLICY PLANK OF HIS PARTY PLATFORM CONTAINS SOME VAGUE REFERENCE

TO "PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN" BUT, THUS FAR,
CANDIDATE HAS BEEN HEARD ONLY TO EXCLAIM REPEATEDLY TO
VOTERS, FELLOW CANDIDATES, AND "POL" WATCHERS ALIKE,
"MERRY CHRISTMAS*"
HARBIN UNQUOTE.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

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